

BIRD DIARY

A scientific guidebook
for bird watching

Opuntia Visual



BIOBUS



Personalize your diary

Cut and paste this sticker on the first page of your bird diary.



GETTING STARTED



Why having a bird diary?

In order to preserve your discoveries: what you have seen, done and thought while exploring in the field is necessary to keep a record of your ideas, observations and thoughts.

Keeping a diary, in this particular case: a bird diary is one of the many steps of pursuing science.

You should take your time to make your observations, look carefully, put your thoughts together, answer questions and ask deeper questions about what you just saw. The process of working on your bird diary will feed your curiosity to know more, who knows maybe after drawing some sketches and writing notes on your diary you can head to the library or the internet to know more about the bird you just saw, where does it live, its environment, what does it eat, etc.

If you feel slightly overwhelmed by the idea of drawing birds: Always remember each person has his or her own style.

Don't worry about making mistakes or get your drawing to be perfect. A diary/journal is not a perfect notebook, it will have raw sketches and notes here and there, its your partner to record your observations and thoughts, so feel free to write, scratch, collect and draw the way you feel it!

GETTING STARTED



Materials:

You can make your supplies as easy or complicated you want. It's all valid!

To get started you'll need a pencil. Any pencil you have at home is great. If you want to get more advanced you can expand towards color pencils, pens or even markers or paint!

Don't forget a good eraser and a pencil sharpener ;)

Washi tape can be a great tool for your journal, it's good to attach a leaf or something you found on the way and it also gives it a nice touch!

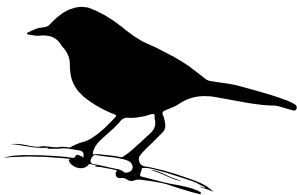


Step by Step: Drawing a bird



1.- Trace a rough sketch of the bird setting a main guideline to help you draw two circles one for the head and one for the body.

2.- Using the sketch trace as the main reference trace the silhouette of the bird.



3.- Define the shades of the bird by identifying darker areas in the bird. Doing this in a monochromatic color (shades of gray) will simplify the task.

4.- Identify which regions of the bird are color and which are black and white.



Selected colors



5.- Color the bird with the colors you selected using the gray scale drawing as a reference for the final drawing.

Observations: Differences among birds

Making notes and drawings of all the observations can be an overwhelming task so the best way to tackle it is by focusing on details. Here you can see some examples where the main point is to notice differences between the birds you observed.

This first example shows two drawings of two different birds, on the left you have a Blue Jay and on the right is a Double Crested Cormorant and on the left, can you see the differences in their beaks and the head shape?



Blue Jay



Double Crested Cormorant

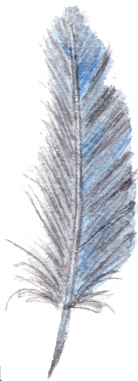
Observations: Differences among birds

A quick tip is that when you're out in the field looking for birds, pay attention to one or two things that caught your eye from that particular bird you found. For example you liked their feather and colors, if you feel is too much to draw the whole bird or you don't remember all the details make drawings and take notes of their feathers! Any detail is as important as the whole bird for your diary.

Here's an example of feathers belonging to three different birds.



Pheasant



Mallard



Woodpecker

Additional information

Keep track of all of your questions:

Write down the date and the time.

Did you see anything different at different times of the day?

Same birds, different behavior?

Make a description of the sound of the bird. Is it constant or it just happened once?

Can you hear a pattern?

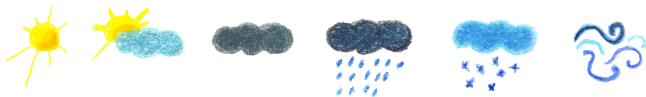
What time during the day it happen?

If you don't know the bird or couldn't see it, write down unknow bird 1, maybe later on another exploration you'll hear it again.

Always keep a list of your day: How was the weather, how many birds did you see in one day, where they interacting with each other or you saw them at different times, don't forget the date, hour, and location. This is helpful for you to compare with other days you went to the same place.

Are there differences if it's raining or a sunny day?

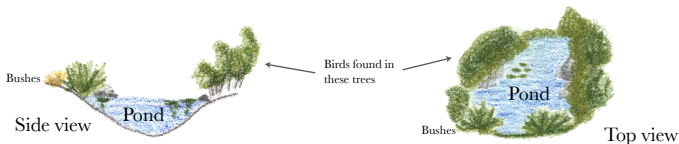
Use simple icons to quickly determine the weather like the ones here:



Additional information

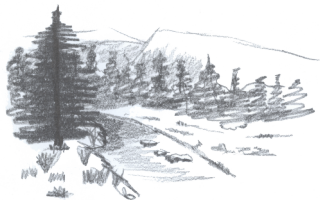
When writing your diary avoid having one detailed drawing in the center of your page. While it can be a perfect drawing for a portrait in your bird jdiary you want to keep records of everything that was happening right there: lists, maps, descriptions, close ups and landscape views.

Here are some example of simple “maps” of a pond in Central Park: where some birds where found nearby. Use them as reminders of locations you have visited.

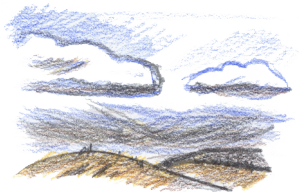


Landscape views are also helpful to remind you of the overall place, and more important is helpful as a quick description of the enviroment where you found your bird. It doesn't have to be complicated, a simple sketch with pencil or colors is good.

Here are some examples:



Pencil sketch

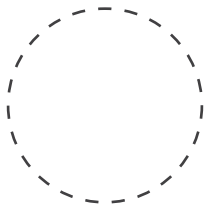
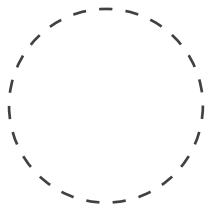
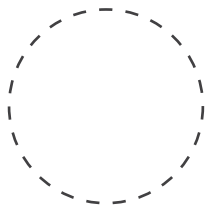


Color sketch

Stickers for your diary

If you feel like you had some remarkable observations of a bird.
Mark it with a sticker! Use the ones below or create your own using the empty circles.

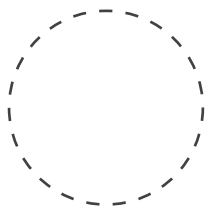
Found an:
Exotic bird
Bird nest
Colorful feathers
A special bird for me



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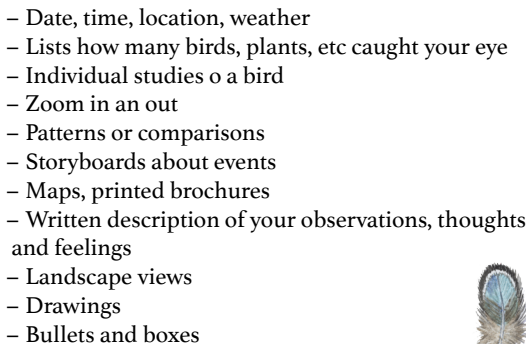
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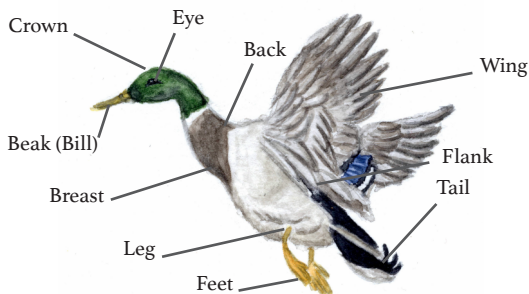
What composes your diary?

Here's a list of main elements you can have on one single page. Keep this in your diary as a reminder of how to build your pages.

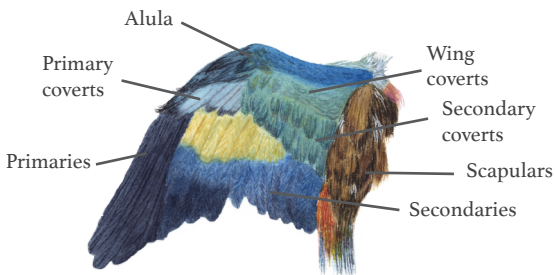
- 
- Date, time, location, weather
 - Lists how many birds, plants, etc caught your eye
 - Individual studies o a bird
 - Zoom in an out
 - Patterns or comparisons
 - Storyboards about events
 - Maps, printed brochures
 - Written description of your observations, thoughts and feelings
 - Landscape views
 - Drawings
 - Bullets and boxes

BASIC ANATOMY OF THE BIRD

BODY PARTS



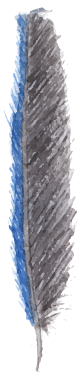
WING PARTS



Types of feathers



Tail



Wing

Birds have different kinds of feathers, each with particular functions such as flight, insulation and courtship displays.



Semiplume



Filoplume

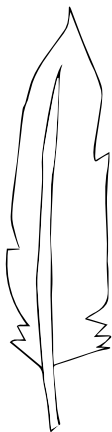


Bristle



Down

Now you have here three shapes of feathers, cut and glue or copy in your diary and color them with your favorite bird feather patterns. If you want to look for more feather patterns search at www.fws.gov/lab/featheratlas



Bird eggs



Another way of doing research about birds is to look at the different types of bird eggs.

They can have different colors, shapes, dotted patterns, etc. Here are some examples extracted from the University of Wisconsin Egg Identification database, you can search more here:

<http://www.uwgb.edu/biodiversity/richter/egg-intro.asp>



- 1) Veery, 2) Ring-necked Pheasant, 3) Spruce Grouse, 4) Sharp-tailed Grouse, 5) Greater Prairie Chicken, 6) Robin, 7) Wild Turkey, 8) Gray Partridge

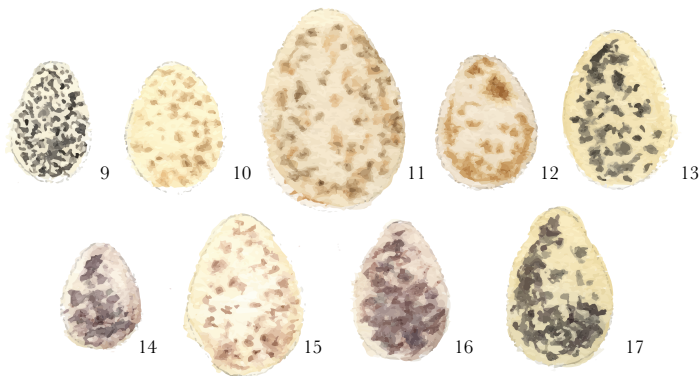
Bird eggs



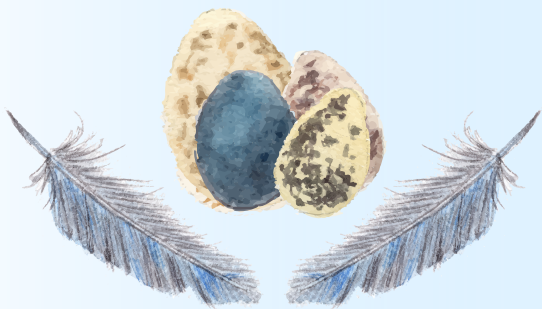
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9) Wilson's Phalarope, 10) American Woodcock, 10) Marbled Godwit, 11) Common Snipe, 12) Black-necked Stilt, 13) Spotted Sandpiper, 14) Upland Sandpiper, 15) Lesser Yellowlegs, 16) Greater Yellowlegs



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